

Wellness Plan • Incentive Strategy

Develop a Comprehensive and Strategic Wellness Plan

Goal: A comprehensive worksite wellness program plan.

Focus: Development of a plan that consists of a variety of awareness, lifestyle change, and supportive environment program, policies, and activities that will target risk behaviors, needs, and interests of employees.

Your worksite wellness program should provide an integrated, strategic approach specific to the needs, goals, and culture of your organization, designed throughout an annual cycle. It will be important to review and revise existing policies governing such areas as smoking, vending machines, and the staff cafeteria. Also, it is useful to examine what worksite wellness or health-promotion activities are offered under your existing health-benefit plan.

Actions:

- Develop activities based on your program goals and the specific needs of your employees. Focus on those topics that are of greatest interest to your employees and the greatest needs of your company, in that order. Avoid topics with narrow appeal.
- Keep it simple. Design the program so it's easy for the participants to understand and track. Let employees focus their learning efforts on their own behavior, not on the rules and regulations of the program. Also, simplify the program administration. Let people record their own activities when possible; create a mixture of self-reported activities along with verified activities.
- Integrate a combination of activities to include awareness, educational, and behavior elements. Link the activities throughout the year to allow for desired behavior repetition.
- Select activities that every employee can participate in.

Examples:

- Challenges: Activities that focus on practicing a desired behavior and continue for 4-8 weeks and focus on specific topics (such as physical activity, nutrition, or stress management).
- Learning experiences (seminars, videos, classes): One-time activities that last for a relatively short time and focus on a specific topic; these can precede "challenge activities" to prepare participants for behavior change.
- Behavior changes (such as smoking cessation): Interventions may or may not be offered at the workplace; individuals should be encouraged to make lifestyle changes that they wanted to make even without the incentive.
- Disease management (support and education groups for diabetes and hypertension): These may be provided or supported by the company through disease-management vendors, or by community, health, or religious organizations.
- New skills (first aid, cardiopulmonary resuscitation): These may be provided or supported by the company, or by community, health, or religious organizations.
- Screenings, wellness assessments, physical exams: A wellness assessment provides the company with aggregate data that can be used in program planning and evaluation; preventive screenings and physical exams can be encouraged by awarding credits to employees.
- Program support (membership or leadership in wellness committee or challenge team): Reward those who work with you to help make your worksite wellness program a success.
- Community events: Reward participation in events like the Heart Walk or March of Dimes Walk; limit the number of these events that can be counted toward the annual total, and be selective about which events you allow to be counted.

Develop An Incentive Strategy

Goal: To motivate and reward employee participation and completion.

Focus: Create a sense of interest in participation and completion of wellness activities.

Providing incentives and rewards will send an important message to the employees that the organization is committed to improving their health and will share the rewards that these changes will bring. It also plays a significant role in motivating individuals to participate.

Actions:

- Identify through employees what incentives they value most.
- Identify what incentives the organization can provide.
- Integrate your incentives into your benefits strategy.
- Ensure that every participant who achieves a goal receives some recognition.
- Offer participation incentives.
- Avoid offering incentives for the “best” or the “most.”
- Avoid rewards for biometric changes.
- Use incentives to promote your worksite wellness program, through logos and branding.

Examples:

Paid time off, reduction in health insurance premiums or co-pays, cash incentives, discounts to health clubs, free pedometers, etc.

